

Status	Approved June 2019	Approval	Full Governing Body
Maintenance	Strategy Committee	Role(s) responsible	Head Teacher
Date Effective	June 2019	Date of last review	March 2019
Date of next review	June 2021	Date withdrawn	Not withdrawn.
Lead Professional	K Fox, AHT	Location of policy	www.coltonhills.co.uk

COLTON HILLS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Principles

Colton Hills Community School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all students, building aspirations, strengthening self-belief and striving for achievement.

We believe that if students are to benefit from their education and achieve their potential, good attendance and punctuality are crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students; we identify and address any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance as speedily as possible.

We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play in establishing regular and punctual attendance and therefore strive to work in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times. A similar approach will be adopted with students whose punctuality is considered to be an issue.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and guidance provided by The Department for Education. This policy supports the wider themes of the Safeguarding Policy in that it promotes wellbeing, happiness and supports the high standards of personal achievement for all.

Attendance and the impact on learning

The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in assessments and public examinations. The results clearly show that missing even small amounts of time from school could have a significant effect on achievement.

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals absent number of days in an academic year	Learning hours lost
Excellent	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10
Good	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
	96%	7.5	37.5
Satisfactory	95%	9.5	47.5
	94%	11.5	57.5
	93%	13	65
Cause for Concern	92%	15	75
	91%	17	85
	90%	19	95

	89%	21	105
	88%	23	115
	87%	25	125
Serious cause for concern	86%	27	135
	85%	28.5	142
	84%	30.5	152
	83%	32	160
	82%	34	170
	81%	36	180

- It is suggested that 17 missed school days a year equals 1 GCSE grade drop in achievement.
- 90% attendance over 1 school year of secondary school equals 4 whole weeks of lessons missed.
- 90% attendance over 5 school years of secondary school equals half a school year missed.
- If a student can improve their attendance by 1%, they will see a 5-6% improvement in school attainment.

Categories of Attendance

Through the 'Wise UP' Scheme we categorise your child's attendance.

Colour	%	Meaning
Gold	97% and above	Excellent
Silver	95-97%	Good
Bronze	92-95%	Requires improvement
Purple	90-92%	Not good enough
Red	Below 90%	Unacceptable – must improve

School Responsibilities

Colton Hills Community School will:

- Work with parents/carers to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance. We will involve representatives of agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or other agencies within the Early Help Locality Team such as Education & Family Engagement Officer and/or Behaviour & Attendance Officer where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.
- Ensure that members of staff receive Continual Professional Development (CPD) to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures as well as school attendance and punctuality levels.
- Convey the importance of good attendance and punctuality for a successful education.
- Ensure there is regular liaison between the House Leader (HL), Assistant House Leader (AHL), Attendance Officer (AO), Community & Inclusion Manager (CIM), Early Help Prevention Officer (EHPO) and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure that weekly meetings between the Attendance Officer and Education & Family Engagement Officer take place to identify, update and monitor students, attendance to enable early intervention. The House Teams are also updated with this information on a weekly basis, which is then fed back to Form Tutors.

- Establish clear, open channels of communication to inform students, parents/carers of any issues with attendance and punctuality but also help understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality through positive reinforcement and working in partnership with us.
- Continue to ensure that realistic targets are set for the whole school and individual attendance and punctuality, in line with national expectations. As a result there will be regular evaluation of attendance and punctuality procedures, systems and interventions.

Attendance Procedures

Daily procedures - Registration

Under the 2006 Education Regulations the school is legally required to register students twice daily. Registers are marked in the morning between 8.30 and .50am and in the afternoon between 1.40 and 2.00pm. It is essential that all students are registered on both occasions.

All students should be on the school site for **8:25am** and in lesson for 8.25am in preparation for the lesson to start. This time is used to make sure students are aware of any changes / arrangements to the day's activities. It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day. Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues – e.g. Fire Drill.

When students are late to school they miss out on valuable lesson time in the morning which is why we take being on time very seriously. The Punctuality Pathway will be followed when a student is late, please see Appendix 1 which highlights each stage.

Student registration requirements

There are four broad classifications in attendance registers:

Present: the student is on the premises at the time of registration.

Approved Educational Activity: the student is engaged in an approved, supervised activity off site, for example field trip, educational visit, sporting activity or work experience.

Authorised Absence: an absence authorised by the school, which includes illness, medical appointments, bereavement or other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be inappropriate. There is no entitlement for students to be guaranteed leave of absence for holidays with parents/carers during term time.

Unauthorised Absence: an absence where the student does not have good cause to be missing from school. Unauthorised absence can be defined in the following ways:

- Truancy – this is action by students who fail to attend school when they should, including leaving the school premises after registration. It also includes action by parents/carers who initiate unauthorised absence by students or who collude with it. Shopping trips, day trips or absence to look after someone else would all constitute examples of unauthorised absence.
- School refusal – this is chronic non-attendance over a period of time, usually an indicator of wider family, psychological or behavioural problems.

The school will aim to highlight and resolve any difficulties regarding a student's attendance as early as possible, using our rigorous monitoring and intervention procedures and pastoral support programmes to help solve any problems. If necessary, services from within the Early Help Locality service will be involved in more complex cases.

First Day Contact

On the first day of absence parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence either by direct telephone contact with the Attendance Officer on (01902) 558455 or by text message to 07624814006.

The Attendance Officer will organise first day contact when reasons for absence are unknown. This will involve telephoning/texting/emailing all parents/carers when contact has not been made. There will be occasions when school staff visit homes when we have concerns about persistent or sporadic absence.

Children Missing in Education

The school recognises that when a child goes missing from school it is a potential safeguarding issue.

If there has been no contact received by the 3rd consecutive day of absence a home visit will be conducted by the Education & Family Engagement Officer (2 days for children on a plan with social care) and the student may be added on to the Children Missing in Education register.

Under section 8 of the Education Regulations Act (2006) the school will make 'reasonable' enquiries into the location of pupils with 10 days continuous unauthorised absence or for those who fail to return from leave of absence granted during term time.

Outstanding Absences

When a student returns to school and there are outstanding or unexplained absence this will be followed up by the Form Tutor, Attendance Officer or House team via contact with parents. The absence will remain unauthorised until contact is made and a valid explanation provided.

Exit/Entry to School During The Day

Students who need to leave during the school day must bring a letter from home and/or an appointment card. Students should bring the note from home to the Student Reception well in advance of the appointment. We would encourage all appointments to be made after 3.00 pm, so as not to impact on your child's learning.

Request for Leave of Absence during term time

During the autumn and spring terms of 2013/14, 35.7 million days were lost in the UK as a result of parents taking their child out of school during term time.

Under the Department of Education 'Advice on School Attendance' parents can no longer expect schools to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday for up to 10 school days per year. The Headteacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. For example, there may have been a bereavement in the family or other serious circumstances or the Headteacher may be aware that a family is under strain and in need of time together.

The Headteacher will also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. From this perspective, leave of absence in term time is no longer a parental right and will only be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion. Under the Department of Education guidelines the school may consider taking legal action against a parent(s)/Carer who takes leave of absence without the Headteacher's permission and apply for a Penalty Notice Fine (£60-£120) to be issued by the Court Section or other legal proceedings by the Local Authority. The £60 Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full separately by both parents within 21 days and will rise to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay this penalty notice may result in prosecution. This would mean the student would lose their place at school. It is also important for parents to note that the student may also be removed from the school register if the parent decides to remove the student from the country for an extended period of time.

It is important for parents /carers to note that the school will not authorise ANY leave of absence unless the school feels the circumstances are unavoidable.

Additionally, the school reserves the right to either contact the parent/carers directly or make an immediate referral to social care or the police if the school feels a student is potentially at risk being taken out of school during term time. This is particularly relevant to concerns the school may have about sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and radicalisation.

The school will seek advice from the local authority if a pupil fails to return from an extended family holiday during term time and the school and local authority have made reasonable enquiries but cannot locate the pupil. This applies to leaves of absence that are both authorised and unauthorised by the school.

Supporting Students and Families with Attendance Issues

We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels valued and secure. Children are, however, sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better for parents to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

There will be times when students will need additional support in improving their attendance or punctuality to school. This will particularly be the case for students involved in truancy, parent condoned absences and school refusal. All interventions will be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of the student. They may involve the Form Tutor, House team, Community Inclusion Officer, the Attendance officer, Assistant House Leader or other members of the Pastoral/Inclusion Team.

Initial strategies may be to:

- Meet with the student and their family to discuss the issues
- Identify any barriers that may be getting in the way of the student attending school
- Implement an Attendance Action Plan to address these issues
- Inform, involve or negotiate with teaching staff where there are particular issues or concerns
- Consider timetable modifications or supplementary provision
- Consider individual and group opportunities for counselling
- Consider peer support and mentoring through 'Wise up' groups.
- Involve the student and parents/carers as far as possible at each stage of the process
- Consider referral to or involvement with external agencies including the Orchard Centre, where home tuition or off-site education may be more appropriate.

Lengthy Periods of Absence

In the case where a student is absent from school for three days and no contact can be made, a home visit will be arranged. The Education Welfare Officer will also be involved and The Local Neighbourhood Police Team may need to conduct a Police Safe and Well check. We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

Continued or ongoing absence

If a student misses, or is in danger of missing 10% or more schooling across the school year and falling into Persistent Absence, parents will be invited into school to discuss the causes of the absence and set targets for improvement. A Parenting Contract may, at this point, be required. The return to school and the reintegration of a student who returns to the school after a lengthy absence requires special planning. The House team, Community Inclusion Officer and other members of the Pastoral/Inclusion Team will be responsible for deciding upon the programme for return and for the management of the programme. All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process which requires extreme sensitivity and that any problems should be referred to the Key Worker for that child as soon as possible. In collaboration with the parent and the EWO, programmes will be tailored to individual needs and may involve phased, part-time re-integration through the Bridge Centre and even support in lessons, as appropriate. This may involve the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDSCO). Staff will be notified of the return of a long-term absentee and a meeting of subject staff who teach the student may be arranged if appropriate. Those students who

are in Alternative Provision and are Dual Registered with the school and another educational establishment will be monitored by the Student Welfare Manager who receives at least weekly attendance updates from the relevant centre.

Rewards and Incentives

Good attendance is acknowledged in form tutor periods, assemblies on a weekly basis. It is also recognised at half term celebration events and at award evenings. Attendance is monitored weekly and students achieving above year group targets are recognised. The school's rewards system recognises weekly and half-termly 100% attendance and encourages students to monitor their own attendance and punctuality. Attendance and punctuality also form part of the Outstanding Student award Criteria (please see Behaviour for Learning Policy Appendix 2). Several inter-form and inter-house competitions also take place throughout the year, including the prestigious Colton Hills Inter House Cup.

Appendix 1 – Punctuality Pathway Morning Registration

Punctuality Pathway



